THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) As per information received from the State Government, due to the recent cyclone, 1196 persons lost their lives, 908 were injured and 1774 were missing in Gujarat. In Rajasthan, 12 persons lost their lives. The Government of Maharashtra has not reported any loss of life or injury to persons due to the cyclone.

(b) In the memorandum submitted for Central assistance from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR), the Government of Gujarat has indicated damange to groundnut, bajra and cotton area measuring 1472 ha. No report on damage to crops has so far been received from Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

(c) An Inter-Ministerial Central Team has already visited the affected areas in Gujarat and has submitted its report. The deputation of Central Teams to Maharashtra and Rajasthan will be considered after receipt of Memorandum from them, indicating the extent of damage etc.

(d) It is primarily the responsibility of these State Governments to provide relief to the people affected by the calamity from the allocation under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) to which 75% is contributed by the Central Government. The Ist and 2nd instalments of Centre's share of CRF for 1998-99 amounting to Rs. 58.06 crore to Gujarat, Rs. 28.36 crore to Maharashtra and Rs. 74.46 crore to Rajasthan has already been released.

The State Government has reportedly made ex-gartia payment of about Rs. 4.04 crore for 472 death cases. The assistance for house hold kits was enhanced from Rs. 150/- to Rs. 300/- per person. A sum of Rs. 67.79 lakhs was paid as cash doles to 23390 families. The State Government is also reported to be taking steps to restore and augment water supply, restoration of electric supply, normalising the transport services and restoration of communication systems in all the affected district headquarters. The Government of Rajasthan paid-ex-gratia of Rs. 1.00 lakh in each of the death cases and also gave assistance for repair of damaged houses and for animals lost. Further relief and rescue measures are being taken by the State Governments.

Fall in Prices of Copra and Coconut Oil

2465. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the steep fall in prices of Copra and Coconut oil;

(b) whether Government will take urgent steps to stop the import of Copra, coconut oil and palm oil to enable the peasants to get remunerative prices for their coconuts; and

(c) whether Government will also take urgent steps to increase the import duty on vegetable oils from the present 20% to 65%?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The Prices of copra and coconut oil in the current season have been lower than those in the last year which had witnessed an unusually high price situation.

As the import of coconut oil, copra and palm oil has been very minimal, any fall in the prices of copra/coconut oil cannot be attributed to their imports. There is no proposal to increase import duty on vegetable oils.

Production of Milk

2466. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the annual production of milk in the country during 1979—95;

(b) what had been the share of National Dairy Research Institute 1979-95;